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Title: Laid a copy of the President's Address to both the Houses of Parliament assembled together on the 9th June, 2014.

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SECRETARY-GENERAL: Madam, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the President's Address to both Houses of Parliament assembled together on the 9th June, 2014.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

***Honourable Members,** I am delighted to address this first session of both Houses of Parliament after the elections to the 16th Lok Sabha. Let me begin by extending warm greetings to my fellow citizens, who participated in large numbers in the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections. We should never forget that we are here because of them. **Serving them should be our first priority**. I also felicitate the members of the new Lok Sabha. You have successfully obtained the mandate from the electorate and now you represent their hopes, aspirations and dreams. I extend a warm welcome to all of you and hope that the sessions ahead with heavy legislative agenda will be productive and useful.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that the recent general elections were smooth and largely peaceful. I would like to congratulate the Election Commission of India and the official machinery for conducting these elections successfully. The unprecedented interest shown by the people of India in the elections is a sign of progressive deepening of our vibrant democracy. Before I dwell upon the tasks ahead of us, I would like to express my solidarity with the families of all those who lost their lives during the election process.

I congratulate the new Speaker of the Lok Sabha on her unanimous election to this august office. By successively electing women Speakers, the Lok Sabha has re-affirmed our age-old belief in the importance of women in our society.

Honourable Members, This has been an election of **Hope**. It marks a turning point in the evolution of our democratic polity. The surge in aspirations and the belief that these could be realized through democratic processes, has been amply reflected in the record 66.4% participation by voters, and a clear verdict in favour of a single political party after a gap of nearly 30 years. The electorate transcended the boundaries of caste, creed, region and religion to come together and vote decisively in favour of **Development through Good Governance.**

The country needed a strong and stable government that could provide effective leadership. In my Republic Day speech earlier this year, I had hoped for 2014 to be a year of healing after the fractured and contentious politics of the previous years. Standing here today, I applaud the wisdom of my fellow citizens for having voted for stability, honesty and development in a resurgent India in which corruption will have no place. They have voted for a united, strong, and modern India - **"Ek Bharat - Shreshtha Bharat"**. My government will work to fulfill these aspirations; with the involvement of all the 125 crore people of this great country.

My government is committed to nurturing the right environment for actualizing this mandate of the people. For this, it pledges itself to the principle of **'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas'**; which can be fulfilled only through your active participation. **We will work together to** re-establish the credibility of the institutions of democracy. My government will function on the mantra of **'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance'.** In all our actions, we will be guided by the core values of our great civilization.

Honourable Members, My Government is dedicated to the poor. Poverty has no religion, hunger has no creed, and despair has no geography. The greatest challenge before us is to end the curse of poverty in India. My government will not be satisfied with mere **"poverty elimination"**; and commits itself to the goal of "poverty elimination". With a firm belief that the first claim on development belongs to the poor; the government will focus its attention on those who need the basic necessities of life most urgently. It will take necessary steps to provide security in its entirety to all citizens; through empathy, support and empowerment.

Containing food inflation will be the topmost priority for my government. There would be an emphasis on improving the supply side of various agro and agro-based products. My government will take effective steps to prevent hoarding and black marketing. It will reform the Public Distribution System, incorporating best practices from the States. My government is alert about the possibility of a subnormal monsoon this year and contingency plans are being prepared.

Despite more than two-thirds of our people living in rural areas; we have not been able to provide adequate public amenities and livelihood opportunities to them. My government is committed to improving the quality of life in our villages, through empowered Panchayati Raj institutions. A substantial part of investment will focus on creating community assets and improving basic infrastructure such as roads, shelter, power and drinking water. My government will strive to end the rural-urban divide guided by the idea of **Rurban**; providing urban amenities to rural areas while preserving the ethos of the villages.

Agriculture is the source of livelihood for majority of our people. In the recent past, our farmers have been under severe stress with hopelessness driving some of them to suicides. My government is committed to reversing this unfortunate trend. It will increase investment in agriculture, both public and private, especially in **Agri-infrastructure.** Steps will be taken to convert farming into a profitable venture through scientific practices and **Agro-technology**. My government will address issues pertaining to pricing and procurement of agricultural produce, crop insurance and post-harvest management. Productivity of Animal Husbandry will be increased. My government will incentivize the setting up of food processing industries. Existing cooperative sector laws will be reviewed to remove anomalies and lacunae. My government will adopt a National Land Use Policy which will facilitate scientific identification of non-cultivable land and its strategic development.

Each drop of water is precious. My government is committed to giving high priority to water security. It will complete the long pending irrigation projects on priority and launch the **'Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana'** with the motto of **'Har Khet Ko Paani'**. There is a need for seriously considering all options including linking of rivers, where feasible; for ensuring optimal use of our water resources to prevent the

recurrence of floods and drought. By harnessing rain water through **'Jal Sanchay'** and **'Jal Sinchan'**, we will nurture water conservation and ground water recharge. Micro irrigation will be popularised to ensure **'Per drop-More crop'.**

Honourable Members, India is the world's oldest civilization. Today it is also a country with the largest population of the youth. We must equip and nurture our youth with the right kind of education, skill-set and opportunity to reap this demographic dividend. My government will strive to transition from **Youth Development to Youth-led Development.** It will set up Massive Open Online Courses and virtual classrooms. It will formulate a National Education Policy aimed at meeting the challenges posed by lack of quality, research and innovation in our educational institutions. We will set up IITs and IIMs in every state. In order to empower school teachers and students, a national e-library will be established. With the motto of **"Har Haath Ko Hunar"**, my government will strive to break the barriers between formal education and skill development, and put in place a mechanism to give academic equivalence to vocational qualifications. With the goal of **Skilled India**, my government will also launch a National Multi-skill Mission.

The children and youth of the country need avenues of recreation that develop them constructively and keep them fit. My government will launch a **'National Sports Talent Search System'**. It will facilitate development and promotion of Indian sports, particularly rural sports. Sports will be popularised by making it an integral part of the school curriculum and providing educational incentives.

Our country needs a holistic health care system that is universally accessible, affordable and effective. To achieve this objective, my government will formulate a **New Health Policy** and roll out a **National Health Assurance Mission**. It will promote Yoga and AYUSH. To address the shortfall of health care professionals, health education and training will be transformed. AIIMS like institutes will be established in every State in a phased manner.

We must not tolerate the indignity of homes without toilets and public spaces littered with garbage. For ensuring hygiene, waste management and sanitation across the nation a **"Swachh Bharat Mission"** will be launched. This will be our tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary to be celebrated in the year 2019.

Keeping in mind welfare of the people belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and the weaker sections of our society; my government will take steps to create an enabling eco-system of equal opportunity in education, health and livelihood. My Government is committed to see that those belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes are able to avail emerging opportunities. For the Scheduled Tribes, my government will launch a dedicated **"Van Bandhu Kalyan Yojana"**. Electrification of tribal hamlets and connecting them with all-weather roads will be a priority area.

It is unfortunate that even after several decades of independence, sections of minority communities continue to suffer from poverty, as benefits of government schemes do not reach them. My government is committed to making all minorities equal partners in India's progress. The government will especially strengthen measures to spread modern and technical education among minority communities and a National Madarsa Modernization Programme will be initiated.

The welfare and rehabilitation of specially-abled people is integral to my government's vision of a caring society. It will take steps to provide dignity of life to them by facilitating their participation in all walks of life. Steps will be taken to identify their special needs and to provide institutional care to them.

My government recognizes the important role our women play in the development of our society and growth of the nation. It is committed to providing 33 per cent reservation to them in the Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies. With a commitment of **"Beti Bachao - Beti Padhao"**, my government will launch a mass campaign for saving the girl child and enabling her education. It will structure a comprehensive scheme, incorporating best practices from States in this regard. In the recent past, the country has witnessed some grue some incidents of violence against women. The government will have a policy of **zero tolerance** for violence against women, and will strengthen the criminal justice system for its effective implementation.

Honourable Members, India is a federal polity. But, over the years, the federal spirit has been diluted. The States and the Centre should function as an organic **Team India**. In order to actively engage with the States on national issues, my government will reinvigorate fora like the National Development Council and the Inter-State Council. The Centre will be an enabler in the rapid progress of States through **Cooperative Federalism**. State-specific development models will be developed taking into account the special needs and unique problems of Coastal, Hilly and Desert areas. Highest priority will be accorded to bring eastern region of the country on par with western region in terms of physical and social infrastructure. My government is committed to addressing the issues relating to development of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The government will lay special emphasis on improving the intra-region connectivity and border infrastructure in the Northeast as well as in Jammu & Kashmir. The issue of infiltration and illegal immigrants in the Northeast region will be tackled on priority and all pending fencing work along the Northeast border will be completed. Special efforts will be made to ensure that Kashmiri Pandits return to the land of their ancestors with full dignity, security and assured livelihood.

My government is committed to providing a clean and efficient administration focussed on delivery. The institution of Lok Pal is important to curb corruption and my government will endeavour to formulate rules in conformity with the Act. My government will take steps to build the confidence and morale of our bureaucracy; enabling it with the freedom to work, and welcoming innovative ideas. The government will stress on putting in place transparent systems and timebound delivery of government services. Government systems and processes will be revisited to make them citizen friendly, corruption free and accountable. Efforts will be made to eliminate obsolete laws, regulations, administrative structures and practices. Rationalization and **convergence** among Ministries, Departments and other arms of the government will be ensured to have focussed delivery. **Digitization** of government records will be done for improving accessibility.

E-governance brings empowerment, equity and efficiency. It has the power to transform peoples' lives. The backbone of my government's new ways of working will be a **Digital India**. IT will be used to drive re-engineering of government processes to improve service delivery and programme implementation. We will strive to provide Wi-Fi zones in critical public areas in the next five years. My government will rollout broad band highway to reach every village and make **all schools e-enabled** in a phased manner. Technology will be used to prepare our children for a knowledge society. The National e-governance plan will be expanded to cover every government office from the centre to the Panchayat; to provide a wide variety of services to citizens. Emerging technologies like **Social Media** will be used as a tool for; **participative**

governance, directly engaging the people in policy making and administration.

My government is determined to rid the country of the scourge of corruption and the menace of black money. As a first step in this direction, the government has already constituted a SIT to unearth black money stashed abroad. This will be followed up vigorously by proactively engaging with foreign governments.

Keeping in mind that **justice delayed is justice denied,** my government will adopt a multi-pronged approach to address the problem of high pendency of cases in our judicial system. It will progressively modernize the courts to improve their operational efficiency, and start reform of the criminal justice system to make dispensation of justice simpler, quicker and more effective. It will initiate a mission mode project for filling vacancies in the judiciary and for doubling the number of courts and judges in the subordinate judiciary in a phased manner. The government will give special emphasis to the development of Alternate Dispute Resolution mechanisms.

Honourable Members, On the economic front, we are passing through an extremely difficult phase. For two consecutive years, our GDP growth has been less than 5 per cent. Tax collection has declined. Inflation continues to be at an unacceptable level. Thus, putting the Indian economy back on track is paramount for my government. We will work together to usher our economy into a high growth path, rein in inflation, reignite the investment cycle, accelerate job creation and restore the confidence of the domestic as well as international community in our economy.

My government will create a policy environment which is **predictable, transparent** and **fair**. It will embark on rationalisation and simplification of the tax regime to make it non-adversarial and conducive to investment, enterprise and growth. My government will make every effort to introduce the GST while addressing the concerns of States. Reforms will be undertaken to enhance the **ease of doing business**. My government will follow a policy of encouraging investments, including through FDI; which will be allowed in sectors that help create jobs and assets.

For rapid creation of jobs in the manufacturing sector, the government will strategically promote **labour-intensive manufacturing.** Employment opportunities will also be expanded by promoting tourism and agro-based industries. My government will transform Employment Exchanges into **Career Centres -** connecting our youth with job opportunities in a transparent and effective manner through the use of technology as well as through counselling and training. The government will strengthen the pension and health insurance safety nets for labour force of all categories and would provide them access to modern financial services.

We need to transform ourselves into a globally competitive manufacturing hub powered by **Skill, Scale** and **Speed**. To this end, the government will set up **world class investment** and **industrial regions**, particularly along the **Dedicated Freight Corridors and Industrial Corridors** spanning the country. My Government will encourage the domestic industry to innovate and collaborate internationally. It will strive to move towards a single-window system of clearances both at the Centre and at the States through a hub-spoke model.

To strengthen our share in global trade, procedures will be simplified and trade infrastructure strengthened so as to reduce transaction time and costs. The SSI and Handicraft sectors will be encouraged by providing them enhanced technological, marketing and investment support. Export potential of this sector will be encouraged. My government will make every effort to improve the working conditions of our weavers in particular. It will also set up a task force to review and revive our MSME sector.

Honourable Members, Lack of robust infrastructure is one of India's major impediments. The government will chalk out an ambitious infrastructure development programme to be implemented in the next 10 years. A fast-track, investment friendly and predictable PPP mechanism will be put in place. Modernization and revamping of Railways is on top of the infrastructure agenda. My government will launch a Diamond Quadrilateral project of **high speed trains.** The country will have a network of freight corridors with specialised **Agri-Rail networks** for perishable agricultural products. Investment in railways will be increased using innovative financing methods. Expansion of railways in Hilly States and Northeast region and modernization of rail safety systems will be prime focus areas. We will encourage R&D and high level local manufacturing for railway systems. A fast, time-bound and well monitored programme for execution of the National Highways programme will be initiated, to overcome the stagnancy of the past few years. Low cost airports will be developed to promote air connectivity to smaller towns. The government will evolve a model of **Port-led development.** Our long coastline will become the **gateway for India's prosperity**. My government will facilitate modernization of existing ports on one hand, and development of new **world class ports** on the other. Stringing together the **Sagar Mala** project we will connect the ports with the hinterland through road and rail. Inland and coastal **waterways** will be developed as major transport routes.

My government will come out with a comprehensive **National Energy Policy** and focus on development of energy related infrastructure, human resource and technology. The aim of the government will be to substantially augment electricity generation capacity through judicious mix of conventional and non-conventional sources. It will expand the national solar mission and connect households and industries with gas-grids. Reforms in the coal sector will be pursued with urgency for attracting private investment in a transparent manner. The international civil nuclear agreements will be operationalized and nuclear power projects for civilian purposes will be developed.

My government is conscious of the fact that our urban infrastructure is under severe stress. Soon, 50 per cent of our population would be residing in urban areas. Taking urbanization as an opportunity rather than a challenge, the government will build **100 Cities** focussed on specialized domains and equipped with world class amenities. Integrated infrastructure will be rolled out in model towns to focus on cleanliness and sanitation. By the time the nation completes 75 years of its Independence, **every family will have a pucca house** with water connection, toilet facilities, 24x7 electricity supply and access.

Honourable Members , While putting the country on a high growth path, my government will keep sustainability at the core of our planning process. My government strongly believes that environmental conservation can go hand in hand with development. To achieve this, environment and forest clearance systems will be made more predictable, transparent and time-bound. Simultaneously, an effective system will be developed for sound appraisal processes and strict compliance of clearance conditions, especially those relating to rehabilitation of displaced communities and regeneration of forests. **Cleaner fuels** will be promoted to bring down pollution levels in our cities. The government will earnestly take up mitigation works to meet the challenges posed by climate change and will closely work with the global community in this regard. Conservation of Himalayan

ecology will be a priority area for my government. A **National Mission on Himalayas** will be launched.

In the recent past, serious concerns have been expressed regarding use of discretionary powers in allocation of our precious natural resources. The government will formulate clear and transparent **policies** on allocation of critical natural resources such as coal, minerals and spectrum.

River Ganga is a part of our rich cultural heritage, a symbol of faith and the lifeline for millions. However, Ganga continues to remain polluted with many stretches of the river becoming dry in lean season. My government will take all necessary steps to ensure a perennial, clean and pristine Ganga.

Our rich cultural heritage is the very foundation on which rests the unity of our diverse nation. Indian languages are repositories of our rich literature, history, culture, art and other achievements. My government will launch a national mission **"e-Bhasha"** that will develop digital vernacular content and disseminate our classic literature in different languages. My government will also provide the required resources for the maintenance and restoration of national heritage sites.

India has a vast untapped potential for tourism which can play a special role in our socio-economic progress. The government will initiate a mission mode project to create **50 tourist circuits** that are built around specific themes. With a view to encouraging **pilgrimage tourism,** a National Mission for beautifying and improving the amenities and infrastructure at pilgrimage centres of all faiths will be launched.

My government recognises the central role of Science and Technology in raising the quality of life. It will encourage and incentivise private sector investments, both domestic and foreign, in science and technology and in high-end research aimed at nurturing innovation. My government will build world class research centres in the fields of nanotechnology, material sciences, thorium technology, brain research, stem cells, etc. The government will also establish institutes of Technology for Rural Development and a **Central University of Himalayan Studies.**

Honourable Members, The government will maintain utmost vigil in the area of internal security. A policy of **zero tolerance towards terrorism, extremism, riots and crime** will be pursued. The States will be assisted for modernizing police infrastructure and equipment to tackle new forms of terrorism including **narco terrorism** and **cyber threats.** A national plan will be chalked out in consultation with the state governments to effectively curb incidents of communal violence and the challenges posed by left wing extremism. My government will take steps to equip the security forces with the latest technology and to improve their working conditions.

My Government will carry out reforms in defence procurement to increase efficiency and economy. It will encourage domestic industry, including the private sector; to have a larger share in design and production of defence equipment. We will introduce policies to strengthen **technology transfer,** including through liberalised FDI in defence production. With readily available skilled human resource, India can emerge as a global platform for defence manufacturing including software, which will strengthen our defence and spur industrial development as well as exports.

The country is proud of its Armed Forces. They serve the nation with professionalism, dedication and valour; securing our nation and supporting relief and rescue operations in the wake of disasters and calamities. We will strengthen defence preparedness by modernising our Armed Forces and addressing the shortage of manpower on priority. Recognising the importance of coastal security, my government will set up a **National Maritime Authority.**

My government will do everything to repay the debt of our brave and selfless soldiers. It will appoint a Veterans Commission to address their grievances, so that they know that we don't stop caring for them when they retire from active service. The government will build a **National War Memorial** to honour the gallantry of our soldiers. **One Rank, One Pension** scheme will be implemented.

Honourable Members, India's foreign policy, with its civilizational roots and heritage, is based on the principles of developing peaceful and friendly relations with all countries. We will pursue our international engagement based on enlightened national interest, combining the strength of our values with pragmatism, leading to a doctrine of mutually beneficial relationships. My government is committed to building **a strong, self-reliant and self-confident India;** regaining its rightful place in the comity of nations.

My government sent a unique and bold signal to the South Asian region and the world, by inviting for the first time in independent India, leaders of all South Asian neighbours to the swearing-in ceremony of the new Council of Ministers on May 26. We are grateful to them for accepting the invitation at such a short notice. Their participation, as also the gracious presence of the Prime Minister of Mauritius; not only added sheen to the ceremony, but also represented a celebration of democracy in the region and convergence of our shared hopes and aspirations. This shows my government's commitment and determination to work towards building a **peaceful, stable and economically inter-linked neighbourhood** which is essential for the collective development and prosperity of the South Asian Region. We will further work together with South Asian leaders to revitalise SAARC as an effective instrument for regional cooperation and as a united voice on global issues.

At the same time, we will never shy away from raising issues of concern to us at a bilateral level. We emphasize that the future of shared prosperity can only be built on the foundation of stability in the region, which requires sensitivity to security concerns and an end to export of terrorism to neighbours.

My Government will engage energetically with other neighbours in our region, including China, with whom we will work to further develop our Strategic and Cooperative Partnership. We will strive to make progress in the many initiatives that are ongoing with Japan, especially in the field of building modern infrastructure in our country. Russia remains a privileged and strategic partner and my government will build further on the firm foundations of this relationship.

India and the United States have made significant progress in developing strategic partnership over the years. My government will bring a renewed vigour to our engagement and intensify it in all areas, including trade, investment, science and technology, energy and education. India also values its broad-based cooperation with Europe. The government will make concerted efforts to achieve progress in key areas with the European Union as well as its leading members.

To fully realize our **softpower** potential; there is a need to integrate it into our external interchange, with particular emphasis on our rich spiritual, cultural and philosophical heritage. The government will revive **Brand India** riding on our strengths of 5T's: Tradition, Talent, Tourism,

Trade and Technology.

Across the world, we have a vibrant, talented and industrious Indian Diaspora that is a source of great pride for us. They have done pioneering work in diverse fields, held the highest public offices and have worked hard to support their localities and families in India. While they have contributed immensely to their adopted country, they also carry a **little flame of India** in their hearts that can light up the promise of change in our country. A hundred years ago, in 1915, India's greatest Pravasi Bharatiya, Mahatma Gandhi, returned home and transformed the nation's destiny. The next Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas in January 2015 will thus be a special occasion. As we celebrate the centenary of Gandhiji's return to India, we would also take steps that would deepen every Pravasi Bharatiya's connection with India and involve them in India's development.

Honourable Members, The people of India have given a clear mandate. They want to see a vibrant, dynamic and prosperous India. They want to see a resurgent India regaining the admiration and respect of the international community. Brimming with hope and expectation, they want quick results. With **three Ds of Democracy, Demography and Demand** on our side, India is poised to actualize these aspirations. We must rise to the occasion to fulfill these great expectations. In 60 months from now, we should be able to say with confidence and pride that we have done it.

JAI HIND